

Message Text

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61/44

ACTION AF-05

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FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2776

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - ADDITIONAL TEXT

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BGEN, BPRO, MJ, US

SUBJ: MAJOR PROJECT: NOUAKCHOTT-KIFFA SEGMENT NOUAKCHOTT-
NEMA HIGHWAY (MORRISON-KNUDSEN)

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 816, 823 AND 1383, THE HAGUE 4742, STATE
140629 (NOTAL)

ACTION REQUESTED: USDOC CONSULT WITH MORRISON-KNUDSEN
US HEADQUARTERS CONFIRM M-K HAS RENEWED INTEREST IN
NOUAKCHOTT-KIFFA HIGHWAY PROJECT. IF RENEWED INTEREST PRESENT,
SUGGEST USDOC/STATE APPROACH MAURITANIAN AMBASSADOR
SEEKING HIS INTERVENTION WITH GIRM REOPEN PROJECT BIDDING.
AT SAME TIME, M-K SHOULD SEND FRENCH-SPEAKING ENGINEERING
REF TO NOUAKCHOTT SOONEST FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH SNIM DIRGEN
OULD AMAR AND MINPUBLIC WORKS ATTEMPT REOPEN BIDDING.
BELIEVE THAT ABOVE ACTION, COMBINED WITH PARALLEL APPROACHES
TO MINPUBLIC WORKS BY EMBASSY, MAY HAVE OUTSIDE CHANCE
REVIVING OPPORTUNITY FOR US PARTICIPATION IN 150 MILLION
DOLLAR-PLUS NOUAKCHOTT-NEMA ROAD PROJECT. USDOC PLEASE
ADVISE SOONEST RESULTS ITS US ENQUIRIES.

1. AS REPORTED NOUAKCHOTT 1383, H. K. FERGUSON REP JOHN
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MONTGOMERY TODAY DISCUSSED NOUAKCHOTT-KIFFA-NEMA ROAD

PROJECT WITH ISMAEL OULD AMAR, DIRGEN GIRM-OWNED SOCIETE NATIONALE INDUSTRIELLE OET MINIERE (SNIM). OULD AMAR IS MEMBER GIRM COMMISSION THAT WILL SELECT CONTRACTOR FOR NOUAKCHOTT-KIFFA ROAD PROJECT. IN ABSENCE MINISTER PUBLIC WORKS AND PROJECT MANAGER, AMAR ONLY GIRM OFFICIAL AVAILABLE DISCUSS PROJECT. OULD AMAR DOUBTS THAT MINPUBLIC WORKS WILL EXTEND BID DEADLINE, WHICH PASSED JULY 15, BUT HE WILL FOLLOW-UP WITH MINISTER WHEN HE RETRURNS FROM PEKING NEXT WEEK. MEANWHILE, AMAR SUGGESTS M-K CONSIDER TEAMING-UP WITH ONE OF 10 INDIVIDUAL COMPANIES OR CONSORTIUMS PRE-SELECTED BY GIRM TO BID ON ROAD PROJECT. (SEE NOUAKCHOTT 816 FOR DETAILS BID PROCEDURES). AMAR ALSO SUGGESTS THAT M-K OR OTHER US FIRM MIGHT HAVE BETTER CHANCE REOPEN BIDDING IF IT COULD OFFER FASTER COMPLETION TIMETABLE THAN COMPETITORS. GIRM ANXIOUS COMPLETE THIS MAJOR SHOWCASE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT AND, WITH ARAB OIL FINANCING ASSURED, WILL GIVE WEIGHT TO PROMISE SPEEDY PERFORMANCE.

2. FOR USDOC AND THE HAGUE: AS INTERIM MEASURE, ALSO SUGGEST THAT M-K SEND ENGINEERING REP TO NOUAKCHOTT SOONEST FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH OULD AMAR AND MINPUBLIC WORKS. REP SHOULD BE FENCH-SPEAKING AND SHOULD BE PREPARED OUTLINE M-K EXPERTIS/ EXPERIENCE IN DESERT ROAD BUILDING. OULD AMAR, LIKE GIRM WASHINGTON AMBASSADOR, HAS EXPRESSED KEEN DISAPPOINTMENT THAT NO US FIRMS BID ON THIS PROJEKT. HE IS PREPARED PUSH FOR ACCEPTANCE LAST ENTRY BY AMERICAN CONTRACTOR BASING HIS PITCH ON SUPIER US TECHNIAL COMPETANCE AND ADVANTAGES US ENJOYS OVER EUROPEAN COMPETITORS, WHO HAVE LESS EXPERIENCE IN DESERT ROAD BUILDING.

3. ONCE USDOC ASSURED THAT M-K US HEADQUARTERS INDEED INTERESTED IN THIS PROJECT (WHICH THEY ONCE DECLINED BID ON--SEE STATE 104629), SUGGEST JOINT USDOC-STATE APPROACH TO MAURITANIAN AMBASSADOR ABDULLAH SEEKING HIS INTERVENTION WITH GIRM REOPEN BIDDING AND EXTEND BID DEADLINE IF NECESSARY. AMBASSADOR ABDULLAH HAS EXPRESSED TO ME AND TO ASST. SECRETARY EASUM HIS DISAPPOINTMENT FAILURE US FIRMS TO BID ON THIS CONTRACT DESPITE USDOC/EMBASSY EFFORTS ATTRACT AMERICAN INTEREST IN THIS MAJOR PROJECT. HE, THEREFORE, SEEMS NATURAL ALLY IN ANY ATTEMPT GET GIRM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REOPEN BIDDING. WE WILL FOLLOW-UP FROM THIS END AS NECESSARY.

4. COMPANIES PRE-SELECTED BY GIRM AND WHO HAVE UNTIL OCTOBER 30 SUBMIT FIRM BIDS ARE:

SOCIETE DES GRANDS TRAVAUX DE L'EST, FRANCE

SOCIETE SPIE-BATIGNOLES, FRANCE

SOCIETE CONSTRUTORA MENDES JUNIOR SA, BRAZIL

PEREVET, MAURITANIA (FRANCE)

STRABAG, GERMANY

CONSTRUZIONI GENERALI FARSURA COGEFAR
SPA, ITALY, AND FOLLOWING CONSORTIUMS:

A. SOCIETE SPIE-BATIGNOLES, FRANCE

SOCIETE CONSTRUTORA MENDES JUNIOR SA, BRAZIL

PEREVET, MAURITANIA (FRANCE)

STRABAG, GERMANY

CONSTRUZIONI GENERALI FARSURA COGEFAR
SPA, ITALY, AND FOLLOWING CONSORTIUMS:

A. SOCIETE NATIONAL DES TRAVAUX PUBLIQUES (FRANCE)
SOCIETE AFRICAINE DE CONSTRUCTION (BELGIUM)

B. COLAS, SA (FRANCE), SOMACO TP (FRANCE) AND ENTREPRISE
GENERAL DE BATIMENT (MAURITANIA)

C. GRUN UND BILFINGER (GERMANY) AND RAZEL (FRANCE)

D. ZSCHOKKE, SSA (SWISS), BLESS, SA (SWISS), SCHELMS, SA
(SWISS) AND ASTALDI (ITALY)

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NOTE: OULD AMAR SUGGESTS BRAZILIAN MAY BE BEST BET FOR PARTNER
INTERESTED US FIRMS.

5. FINALLY, WISH EMPHASIZE THAT FEARS EXPRESSED
BY SOME US COMPANIES (STATE 140629) THAT THIS IS FIXED PRICE
CONTRACT DEAL ARE APPARENTLY GROUNDLESS. AT NO POINT
HAS ANY GIRM OFFICIAL MENTIONED FIXED PRICE AS CONTRACT
PRE-CONDITION. THEREFORE, IT SEEMS SAFE ASSUME THATSTHIS
AND ALL OTHER FACETS OF ANY CONTRACT EVENTUALLY SIGNED ARE
OPEN TO NEGOTIATION. THIS BEING UNDERSTOOD, HOPE THAT
USDOC/STATE WILL TAKE ANOTHER GO AT ATTRACTING US COMMERCIAL
INTEREST IN THIS MAJOR PROJECT.
SHURTLEFF

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